



Deborah Senn
Washington Insurance
Commissioner

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 4, 2000

COMMISSIONER SENN ANNOUNCES THAT FIRST POLICYHOLDER LISTS OF HOLOCAUST-ERA POLICIES RELEASED TO WASHINGTON STATE

SEATTLE, Wash. – State Insurance Commissioner Deborah Senn said today her office has received the first lists of policyholders from European insurers from their Holocaust-Era records. The first of the lists has already been posted on her Internet site.

“This is a first step, but it is a big one,” Commissioner Senn said. “These lists are a crucial element in the drive by Holocaust survivors and heirs seeking benefits denied them by European carriers at the end of World War II.”

Commissioner Senn said the lists were the first to be turned over to a U.S. Commissioner. She said she looked forward to posting additional names and lists from other companies as well as the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC), a voluntary panel formed by U.S. insurance commissioners in 1998.

Commissioner Senn said the initial two lists included:

- Names of policyholders by an unidentified British insurer which operated branches in Poland before 1939, when the Nazis invaded Poland and overwhelmed the nation's armies in a few days. Most of those records were from the Warsaw area, Commissioner Senn said.
- Records of the Dutch insurance companies who announced earlier they would deal directly with states like Washington, whose legislatures passed strong laws requiring European companies and their U.S. subsidiaries to account for Holocaust-Era policies.

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Commissioner Senn said she was pleased by the Dutch companies' response. The Dutch list, which includes more than 1,000 names, will have to be analyzed before it can be posted on the Internet. But she said that should occur quickly.

The Dutch list has been newly reconstructed by several companies working together under the Dutch Association of Insurers. The list reportedly contains all known unpaid policies confiscated by Nazi authorities during the German occupation of the Netherlands.

Commissioner Senn said the name of the British insurer was being withheld for now by agreement with the American affiliate that passed the list to her office. She said that list, which includes more than 1,600 names, was compiled from copies of correspondence from policyholders, requests for information, and other fragmentary details, and may include names of people who were not policyholders.

"People who find names they recognize on this list will need to contact my office so we can help them follow up on their search," Commissioner Senn said. The list is posted on the Holocaust-Insurance pages of her Internet site:
<http://www.insurance.wa.gov>

Commissioner Senn said she expects the two lists to be the first of many that will be provided by insurers complying with the state's law. She reiterated her belief that the lists are "the most important single source that will lead to closure of this 50-year-old injustice."

The 1999 Washington state law requires insurance companies to submit reports outlining their policy records during the Holocaust Era. Companies like Generali that have been working with ICHEIC voluntarily were spared those requirements until January 1, 2000, and Commissioner Senn is currently deciding whether that so-called "safe harbor" should be extended.

Commissioner Senn said she is still planning a second hearing at which non-ICHEIC companies will be asked to explain their lack of progress toward settlement.

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EDITORS: Survivors, families or heirs with questions about the Holocaust Insurance Claims effort may contact the Washington State Holocaust Survivor Assistance Office toll-free at 1-888-606-9622, or at (360) 664-3860 or (360) 664-3790. Information also is available on Commissioner Senn's web site at *<http://www.insurance.wa.gov>* Other lists are expected to be posted on the ICHEIC site, *<http://www.icheic.org>*